

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 12 with the following rewritten paragraph:

In a refinement of this invention, the usage rate profile data includes acceptable consumption rates for system consumable materials. The usage rate profile data can also include wear rate data for various system components. In a further refinement, the monitoring step includes repetitively reading the parameter to determine an actual rate of usage. The parameter can be either a consumable material level indicator or a component wear indicator. In further refinements, the rate profile data is organized by users or by accounts so that consumption can be identified accordingly. The usage rate profile data can include budget expenditure rate data; ~~the~~ The budget rate expenditure data may be organized by budget users. ~~Or, or the~~ budget expenditure data ~~is~~ may be organized by budget account. In another area of refinement, the usage rate profile data is organized with various aspects of time. This includes organization by time of day, by day, and by calendar events.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 24 with the following rewritten paragraph:

In a further refinement, the configuring step further includes the steps of periodically performing the monitoring step and determining a trend of parameter values over time, and then saving the trend of data values in the usage rate profile data. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The parameter is compared with the trend of data values. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The method adds the steps of receiving reserve level data of a system resource corresponding to the parameter, and calculating a depletion factor with respect to the trend of parameters values and the reserve level data. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The generating step includes the step of outputting

the depletion factor. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The method includes the step of allocating the system resource according to a usage priority factor so that higher priority tasks may be assigned to receive system resources before lower priority tasks. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The priority factor is based on user identity. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The usage priority factor is based on account identity. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The alert condition includes an indication of the depletion factor. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The method includes the step of automatically ordering replenishments for the system resource in response to the alert condition. Thus, the depletion calculation is used advantageously to avoid down time due to a lack of resources.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 12 with the following rewritten paragraph:

In yet other refinements, the alert condition includes an alert indicator. In a further refinement, the generating step further includes the step of communicating the alert condition via telecommunications, such as but not limited to wire-line or wireless signaling. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The generating step includes the step of disabling the system to prevent waste and misappropriation of resources.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 17 with the following rewritten paragraph:

The present invention also teaches a corresponding apparatus for providing an alert notification for a system. The apparatus includes a means for configuring usage rate profile data in a database, a means for monitoring a parameter of the system, a means for comparing the parameter with the usage rate profile data, and a means for generating an alert condition if the parameter deviates from the usage rate profile data. ~~In a refinement of this apparatus, the~~ The usage rate profile data includes

consumption rates for system consumable materials. The usage rate profile data can include wear rate data for system components. The parameter can be a consumable material level indicator or a component wear indicator. In a further refinement, the usage rate profile data includes budget expenditure rate data, and can be organized by time.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 28 with the following rewritten paragraph:

In other refinements of the apparatus, the means for configuring further includes a means for periodically monitoring the parameter, a means for determining a trend of parameter values over time, and a means for saving the trend of data values in the usage rate profile data. ~~In a refinement of this, the~~ The parameter is compared with the trend of data values. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The apparatus also includes ~~a means~~ an arrangement for receiving reserve level data of a system resource corresponding to the parameter, and ~~a means~~ for calculating a depletion factor with respect to the trend of parameters' values and the reserve level data. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The apparatus also includes a means for allocating the system resource according to a usage priority factor. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The apparatus also includes a means for automatically ordering replenishments for the system resource in response to the alert condition. ~~In a further refinement, the~~ The apparatus also includes a means for disabling the system.